



## “Roundtable Discussion on Agriculture in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”

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**Seoul, Republic of Korea**



**World Food Programme**



World Food  
Programme

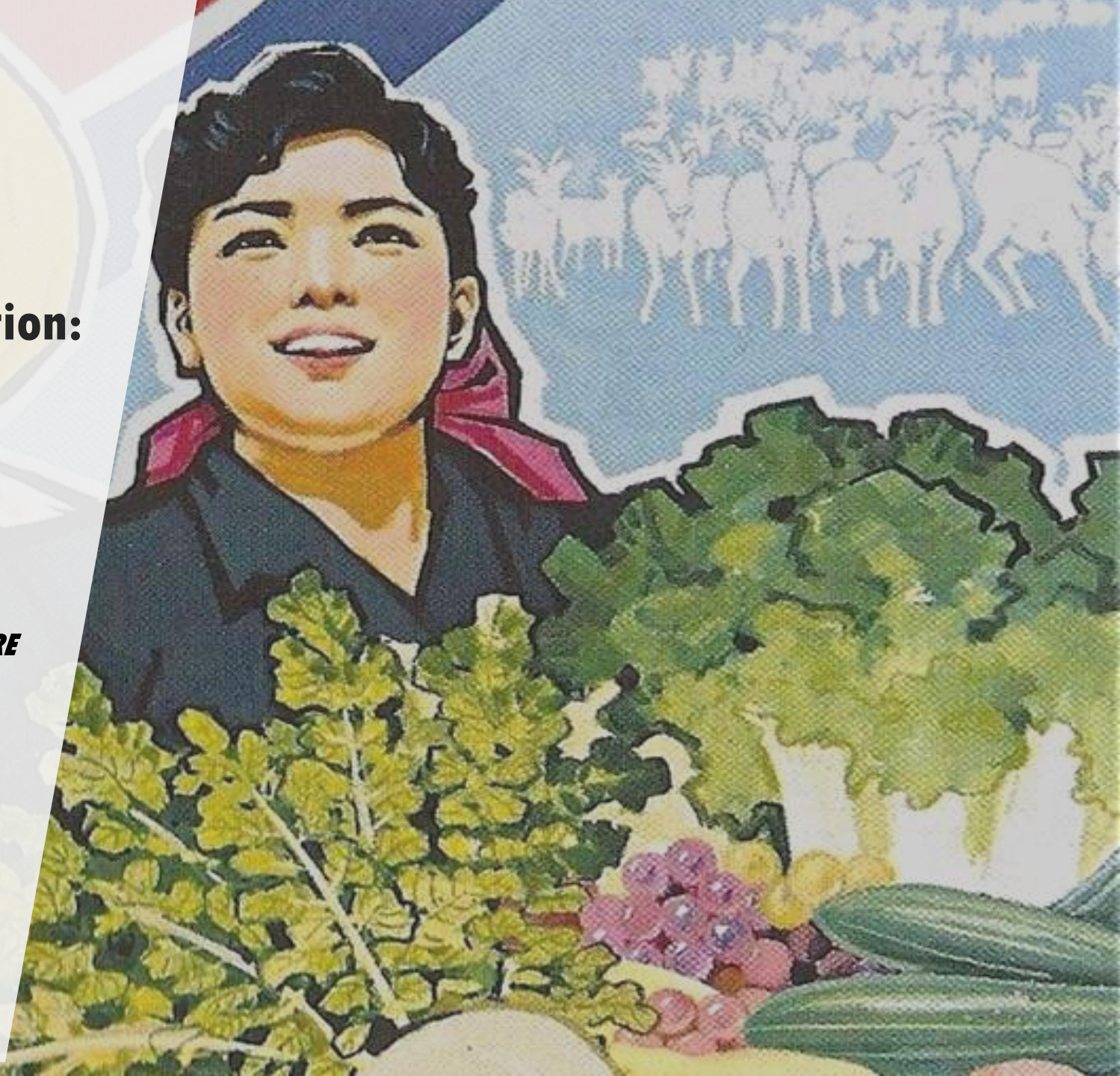
# DPR Korea

## Food Security and Nutrition: WFP's assessment

***2019 ROUNDTABLE ON DPRK AGRICULTURE***

**Seoul - September 2019**

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES



# OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY



29 Mar. to 12 Apr. 2019  
FAO + WFP experts accompanied by CBS staff in 4 teams



12 counties, 6 provinces, 54 households (Apr. 2019)  
25 counties, 8 provinces, 125 households  
(WFP Assessment, Nov. 2018)



Conduct an independent assessment of the 2018 **production** shortfall and the **food security** situation



A variety of methods used to triangulate information:

- Literature and secondary data review
- Key informant discussion at national and county-level government
- Cooperative farm visits, Post-Distribution Center visits
- Household survey



## ANALYSIS

- Retrospective analysis of official production data for 2018 main harvest;
  - Early forecast to produce the 2018/19 winter and spring crops
  - Estimate of food crop import requirements for the 2018/19 market year
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- Selection of counties of diverse food production situation and weather shock impact;
  - Conclusion on household part drawn from **two** assessments, April one and another one conducted by WFP in November 2018 where 125 households were interviewed



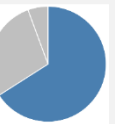
Two assessments in total cover:

**179** Households, including  
**37** Counties

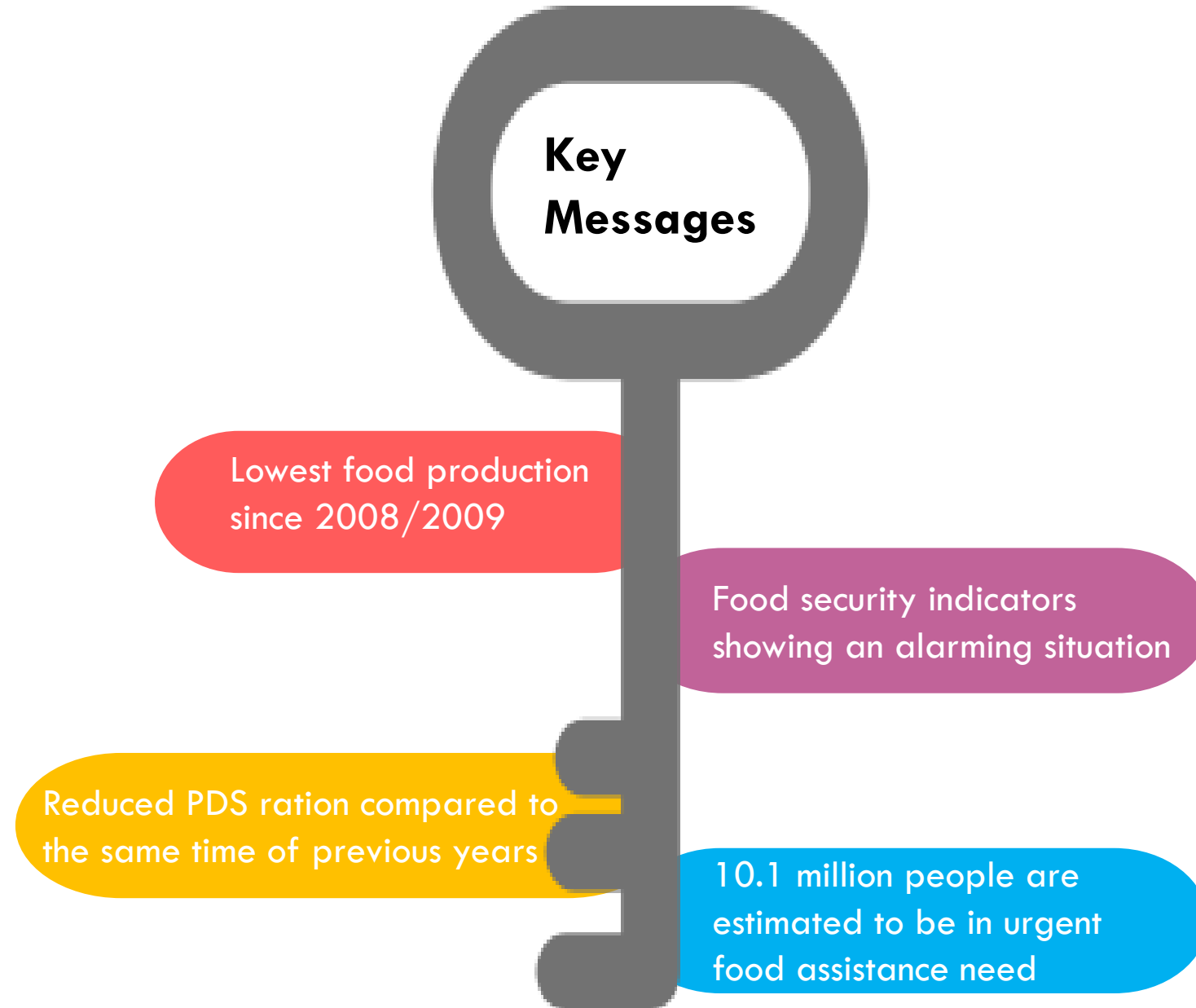
**118** PDS Households

**51** Cooperative Farmer Households

**10** Mixed Households



# KEY MESSAGES

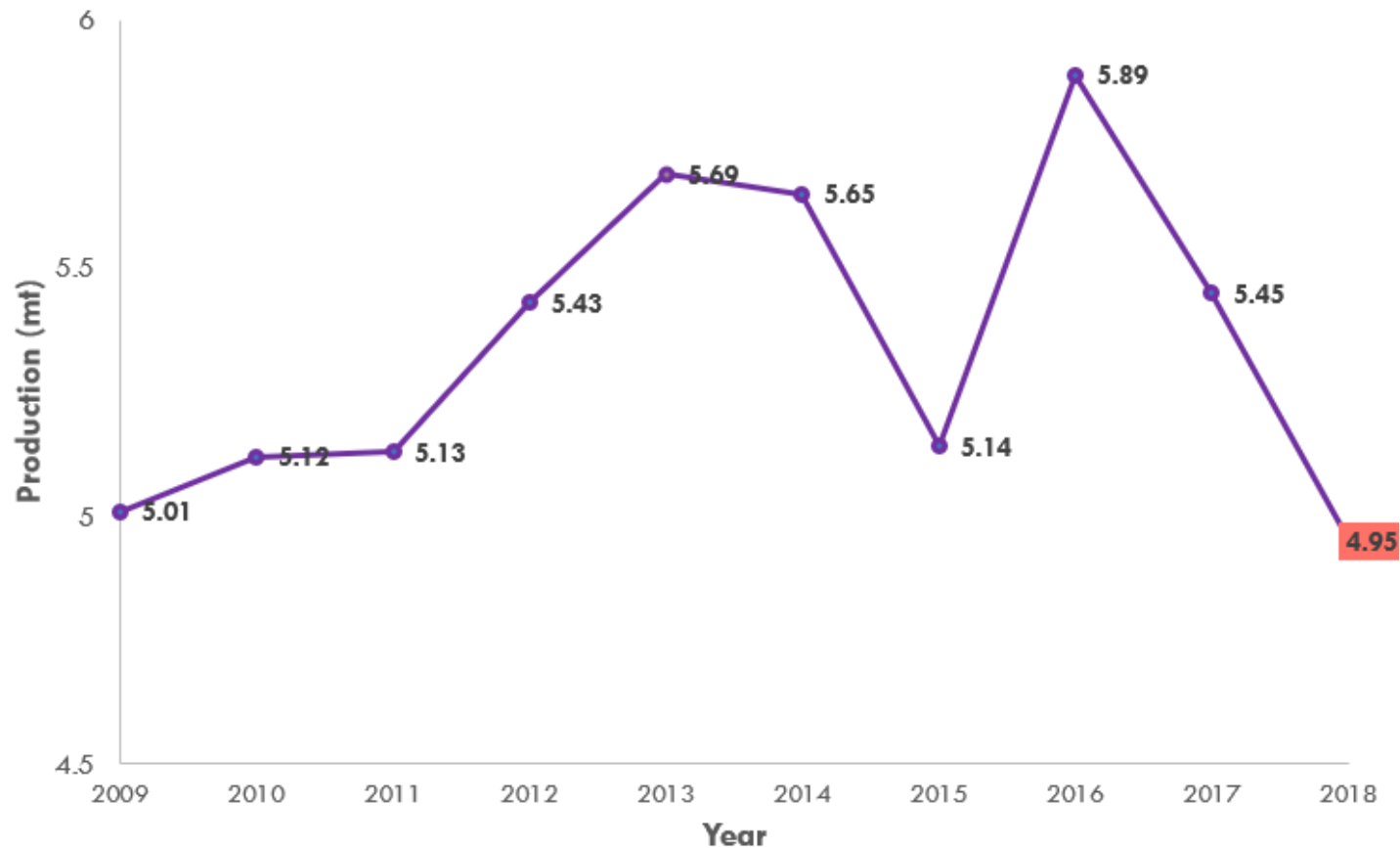


An aerial photograph of a wide river valley. A dirt road winds along the right bank of the river. Several white SUVs are parked or driving along the road. The landscape is green and hilly, with some stone walls visible. The entire image has a light blue overlay.

# **FOOD PRODUCTION ANALYSIS**

# Food Production in 2018

The **2018** aggregate food crop production is estimated to be at **4.9** million MT, **12** percent below previous year's near-average level and the lowest level since the **2008/2009** season .



## Factors affecting yield:

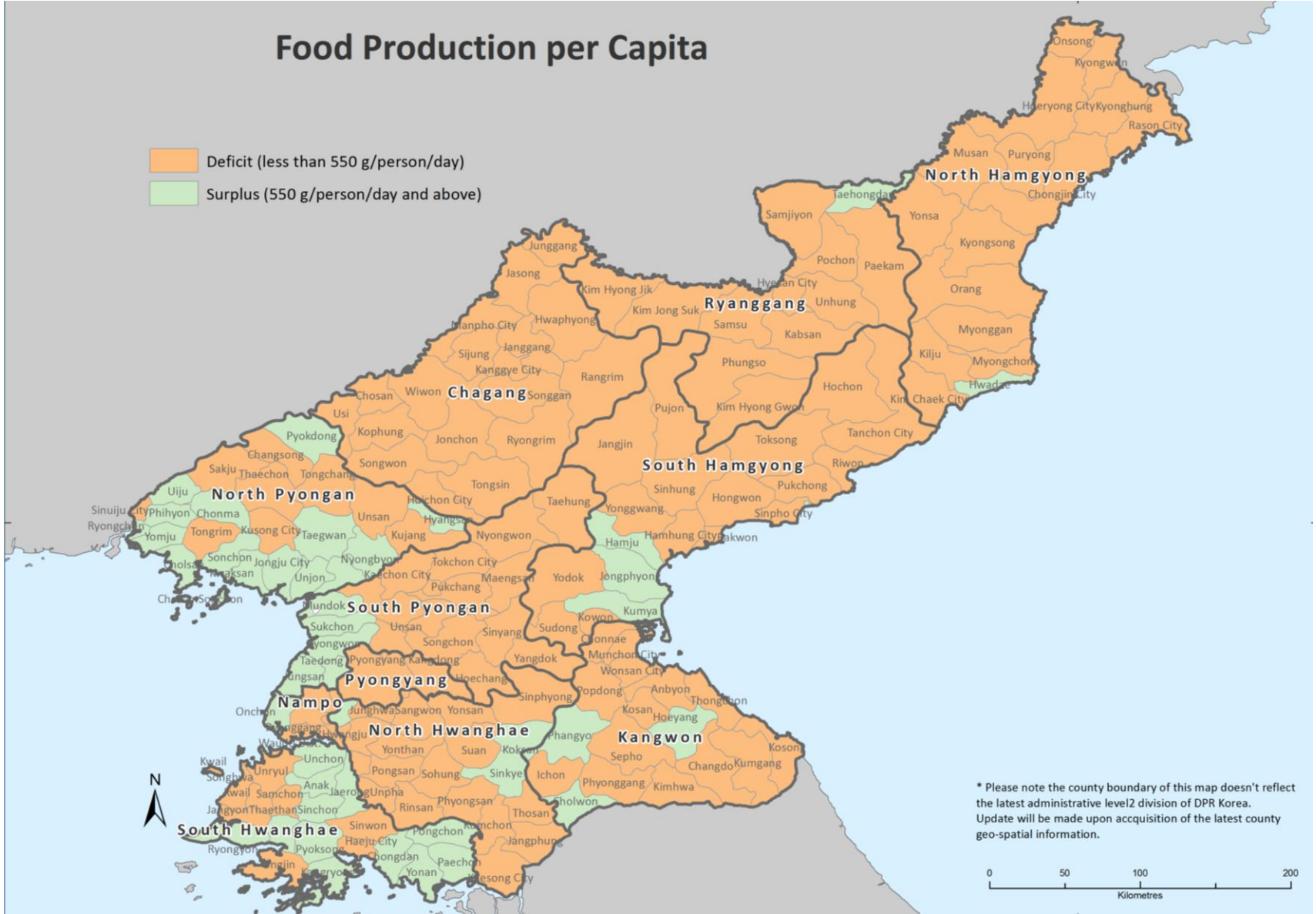
- Natural disaster
- Seeds
- Plastic sheeting
- Fertilizers
- Farm power and fuel
- Crop pest and disease control
- Irrigation



The uncovered deficit for the full marketing year is estimated at an elevated level of about **1.36** million mt.

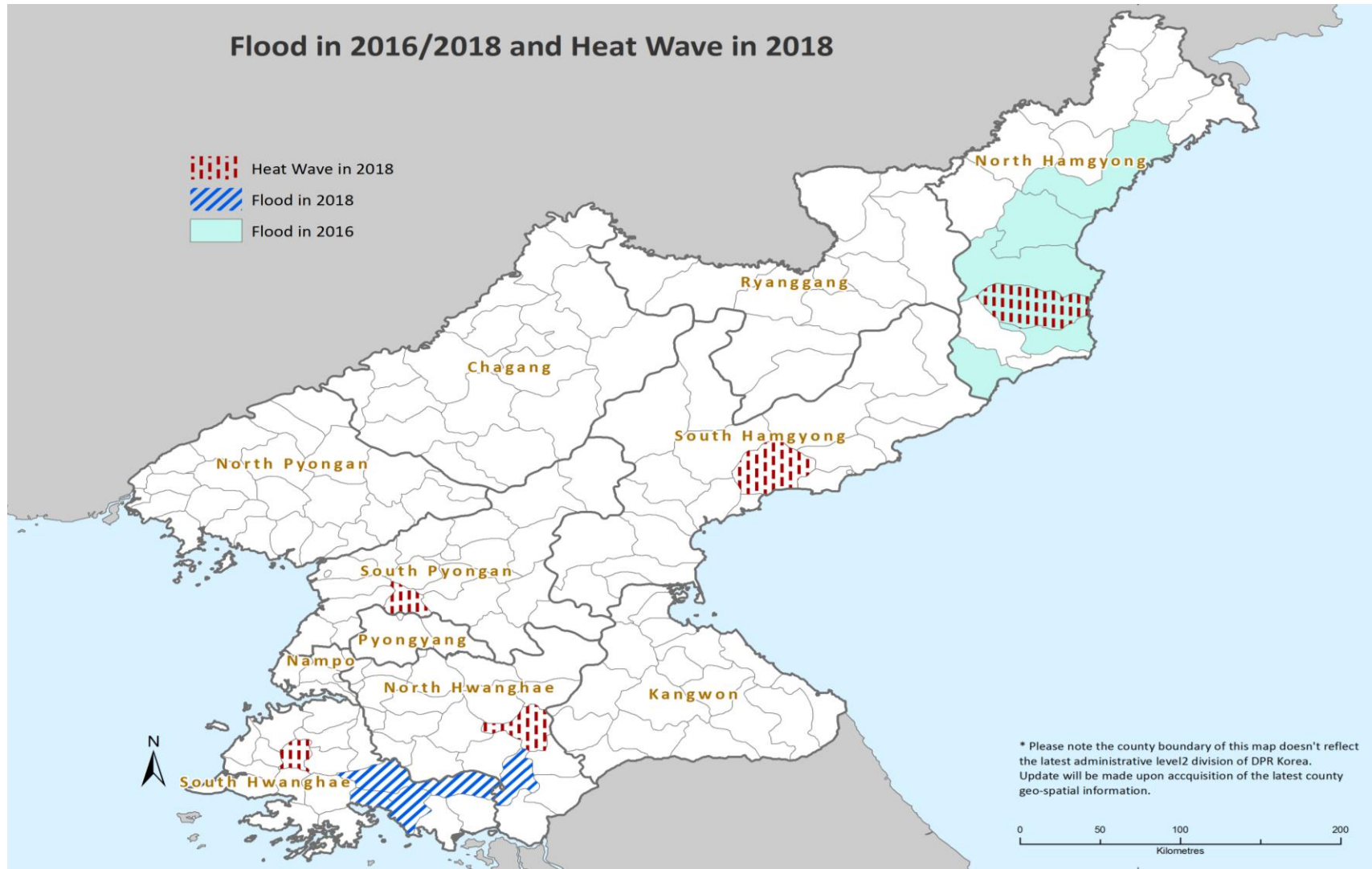
# Food Production per Capita

- Deficit (less than 550 g/person/day)
- Surplus (550 g/person/day and above)



\* Please note the county boundary of this map doesn't reflect the latest administrative level2 division of DPR Korea. Update will be made upon acquisition of the latest county geo-spatial information.

# Weather Conditions



# Reduced Harvested Area

2018 total harvested area is 1.2 million ha – 5 percent below the 5-year average

*Due to:*



Weather-related area losses



Dysfunctional agricultural equipment



Limited availability of inputs

Area	2018/2019 (‘000 ha)	Average
Paddy	471	496
Maize	508	535
Soybeans	107	148

## CROPS PRODUCTION: KEY FACTS

- Only 15 percent of the land (1.9 million ha) is suitable for agriculture
- 5-75 Group: southern and central provinces produce 75 percent of crops (rice and maize); Ryangang - potatoes
- Main harvest btw September and October (rice; maize; soybean; sorghum; potatoes)
- Early crops harvested in June and July (winter wheat; barley) about 8 percent of total production

Source: CBS



# Government Agricultural Policies: Key Principles and Five-year Economic Development Strategy 2016-2020



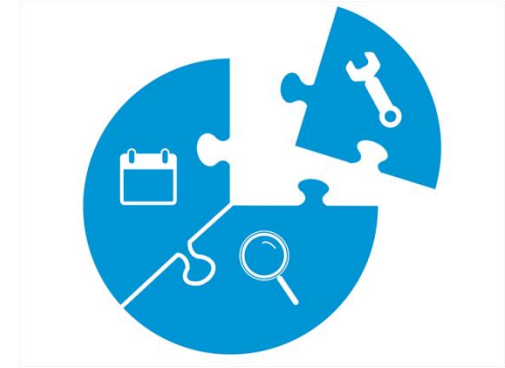
- Juche principles of sowing right crop in the right place, and in the right time.
- Five-Year Economic Development Strategy 2016-2020: the government sets annual production targets for cooperative farms).
- Focus on scientific revolution: superior seeds and high-yield farming; increased mechanization to 60-70 percent; improved technical skills of the agricultural workers.
- Labor mobilizations and ideological work as a means to increase labor productivity (and cope with low mechanization).
- Increase of greenhouse vegetable and mushroom production; The 2nd-stage construction of South Hwanghae Province waterway; Increase of livestock production (grazing livestock); Vitalization of fish farming and aquaculture; individual planting of fruit trees.

## ***Top Political Agenda:***

- Five-Year Economic Development Strategy 2016-2020
- 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Working Party of Korea 2016
- 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Union of Agricultural Workers of Korea 2016
- 4<sup>th</sup> National meeting of Activists in Agricultural field 2018
- New Year Address of 2018 and 2019



# Food Production factors and challenges in DPRK



- Insufficient agricultural inputs (fertilizers, agricultural tools, fuel)
- Rudimentary agricultural production facilities
- Unfavorable weather condition and natural hazards (floods, heatwave)
- Irrigation: low level of water in irrigation reservoirs; difficulties in pumping water due to lack of fuel and electricity
- The 2018 aggregate food crop production, including the ongoing 2018/19 early season crops, is estimated at 4.9 million tons, 12 percent below the previous year's near-average level and the lowest since 2008/09.

An aerial photograph of a winding river in a rural landscape. A dirt road runs parallel to the river, with several white SUVs parked or driving along it. The surrounding area is green and hilly, with some utility poles visible in the distance. The entire image has a light blue overlay.

# **PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND OTHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

# Food Storage and Distribution Challenges

Storage challenges at both cooperative farm and household level due to poor facility maintenance and lack of power

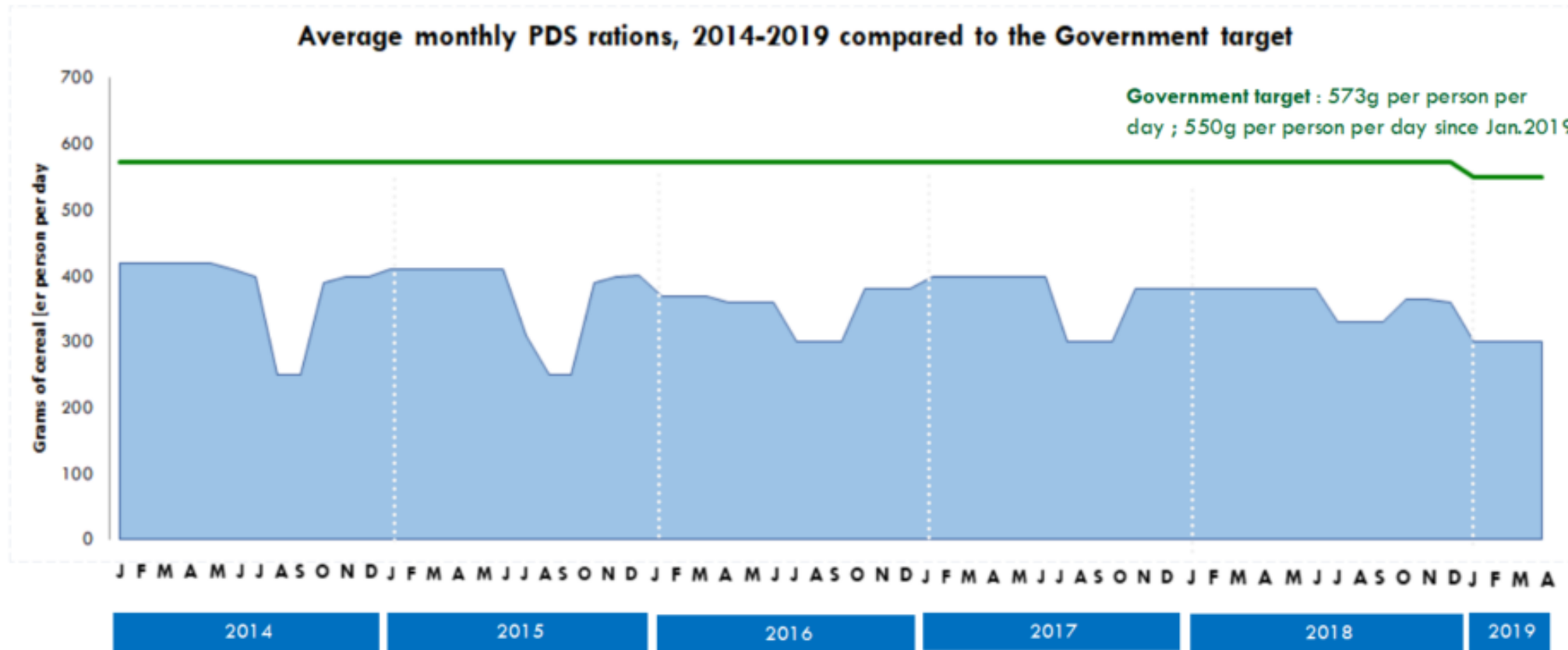
Lack of transport and fuel to haul the crop field to the processing factories

Heatwaves aggravated the power shortage and storage problems, causing more food losses

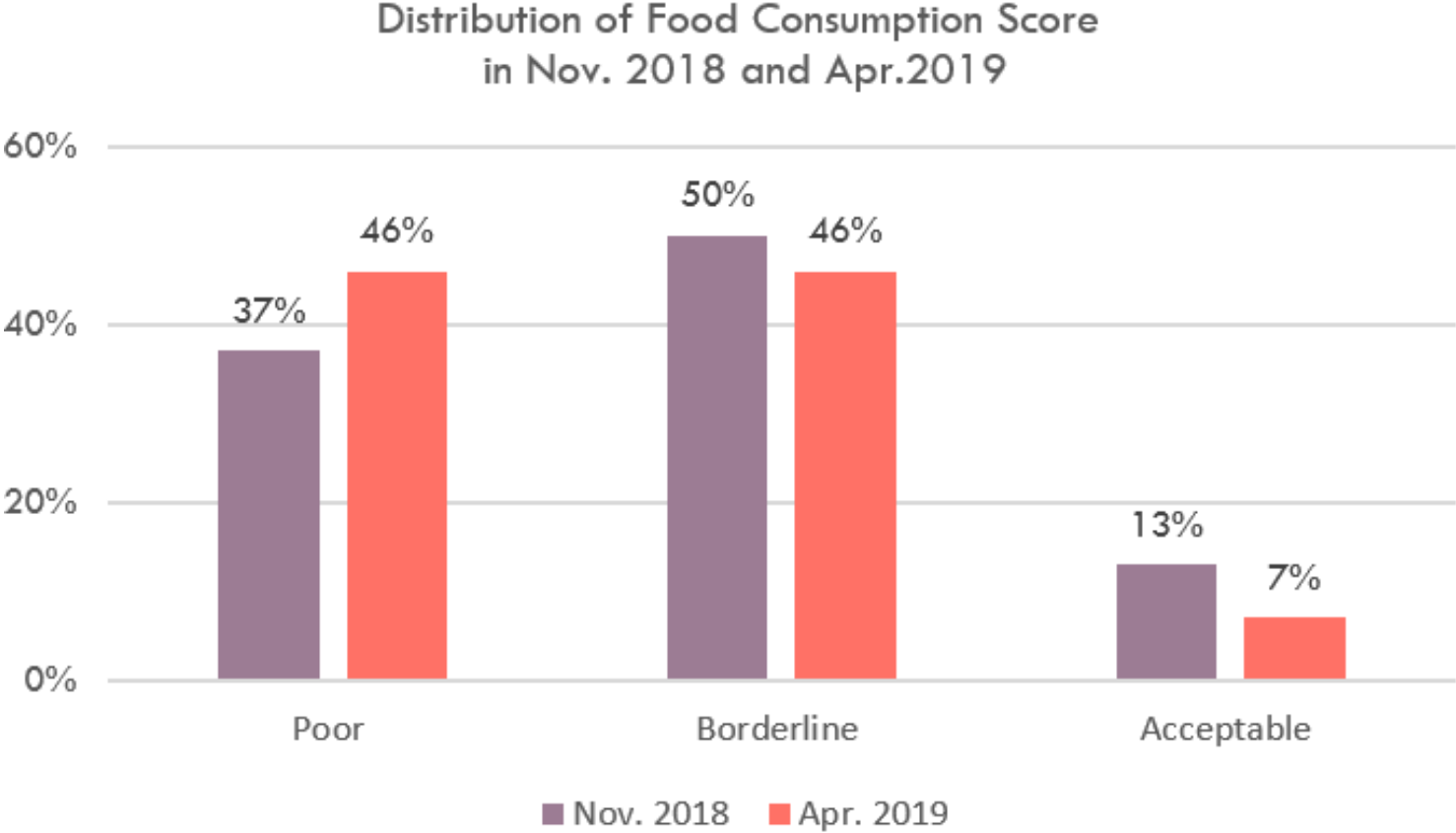
Most of cooperative farming households have basic or none storage facilities, disabling them to store post-harvest distribution effectively for 1 year as needed

The rapid FAO/WFP food security assessment estimated post-harvest losses to range from 20 to 22 percent for cereals, 30 percent for potatoes and 10 percent for soybeans. Losses for cereals in marketing year 2018/19 are expected to be higher than usual

Since this January, rations of the Public Distribution System (PDS) have been reduced to **300**grams per person per day, a lower level compared to previous years. The data is still not available on the early crop – situation continues to be serious and is closely followed.



**Food Consumption score (FCS), as a proxy indicator reflecting household-level food access and dietary diversity, points to an overall alarming situation.**



Overall, it is estimated that **10.1** million people (40 percent of the population) are in urgent need of food assistance.



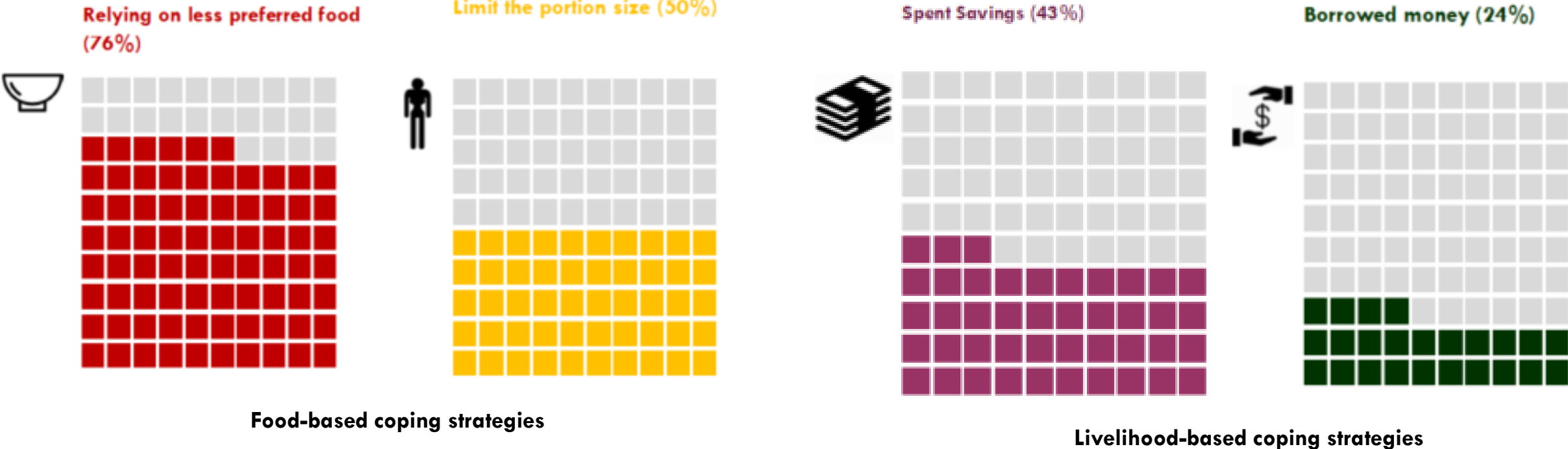
## Households and Coping Strategies

- ▶▶▶▶ Distribution system remains to be the alleged official channel for access to staple food.
- ▶▶▶▶ However, markets, state shops and kitchen garden have proved to be significant food sources for people to seek to meet their needs.
- ▶▶▶▶ Buying and selling food are common behaviors especially about rural households. Cash is mainly used for market exchanges while coupons apply for state shops.
- ▶▶▶▶ Informal network exchange is common; “kinship economy” is a significant element of food security (farmers send food to their urban relatives) out of government distribution or markets.
- ▶▶▶▶ People’s diet has shown an alarmingly low level of food diversity in both urban and rural areas bearing negative nutrition implication.
- ▶▶▶▶ Seasonality pattern of food consumption difficulty has been identified. Households tend to report difficulty having enough to eat from April to September.



# Coping Strategies

Corresponding to the widespread suboptimal food consumption is the frequent adoption of coping strategies at household level to mitigate the food shortage.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Immediate actions



### Food security related

- Targeted general food distribution of a diversified basket of cereals and pulses;
- Prioritize counties by food deficit and climate impact;
- Expand coverage of nutrition programmes;
- Expand food distribution through asset creation programmes;
- Ensure a robust monitoring system;
- Update food security situation at the end of lean season



### Agriculture related

- Provide water pumps;
- Import agricultural chemicals;
- Provide ready-to-install greenhouses and plastic sheeting;
- Provide high-quality vegetable seeds;
- Improve the level of biosecurity of livestock farms;
- Provide appropriate amounts of veterinary drugs, medicines, disinfectants and other supplies
- Import appropriate amounts of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Medium- to long-term actions



Sustain nutrition and food security operations



Provide machinery and equipment



Improve and upgrade storage facilities



Introduce measures to diversify the crop production



Provide equipment for drying or desiccation of vegetables



Improve facilities for food processing and transformation



Improve capacity of detecting and controlling outbreak of African swine fever



Establish a robust food security and nutrition monitoring system

# WFP- DPRK

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  - Prioritize counties by food deficit and climate impact;
  - Expand coverage of nutrition programmes;
  - Expand food distribution through asset creation programmes;
  - Ensure a robust monitoring system;
  - Update food security situation at the end of lean season
- No General Distributions, a fortified cereal and fortified Biscuits are provided to a targeted group.
  - In 9 Provinces and 60 food insecure counties - prioritizing counties by food deficit and climate impact;
  - Coverage in nutrition programs is to targeted group of: PLWs, Nurseries, Kindergarten, TB Patients, pediatric wards and orphanages;
  - DRR Activities oriented towards Preparedness, Prevention and mitigation;
  - Multiple weekly monitoring missions w/Korean Speaking Monitor;
  - WFP Co-leads the Sector Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition and closely monitors the FS situation – updating through 2<sup>nd</sup> party means as well as own monitoring of the situation



# WFP- DPRK in Numbers



135,000 Pregnant and Lactating mothers – currently attending 114,500



335,000 children in nurseries – currently attending 332,500



195,000 children in kindergartens – currently attending 100,000



TB Program 58,500 – currently attending 8,200



Disaster Risk Reduction Activities – due to insufficient funding currently it is the least prioritized at present; This area of intervention is highly inelastic as was evidenced in 2018 with the large food deficit in 2019.



# WFP- how we do it!



Our greatest Asset – A cadre of Multicultural/Multifunctional technical International staff;



A Multi-Disciplinary Project Management Team incorporating technical Line ministries, enhancing the targeting and prioritizing of the areas of intervention;



Rigorous Monitoring, Daily trips to the field – direct beneficiary contact, Intl Korean speaker on staff, to HH, LFPs, Nurseries, Hospitals, Orphanages, PDCs etc.; Operating in 9 Provinces and 60 counties;



Production of Fortified Foods – Cereals and Biscuits; Supervised by an Intl Food Technologist; Direct Monitoring of production sites (11) for Quality and Quantity control



# WFP - Challenges

There several challenges, the central and pivotal challenge is a predictable and consistent Supply Chain to ensure an un interrupted humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable.

A predictable and flexible funding enables WFP to enhance its negotiations with Govt Authorities, plan, prioritize, monitor and achieve better outputs and ultimately outcomes

WFP is operating below its capacity – not due to physical constraints or country context, we have the capacity to extend our reach to assist the food insecure – double or triple our current footprint and ensure that the gains that have been achieved in reducing malnutrition (28%-19%) are not lost;



# THANK YOU



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